# PART 3 - THE TRIBULATION. - CHAPTER 4: THE TRIBULATION.

Chapter 4: THE TRIBULATION
The Tribulation is a special seven-year period of time that commences after the Church-Age and ends with the Return of Christ: Immediately after the Tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken (Matthew 24:29).
The Tribulation is a time of trouble, especially for Israel, but in it they will turn back to God:
When you (Israel) are in distress (Tribulation), and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the LORD your God and obey His voice (for the LORD your God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them (Deuteronomy 4:30,31).

The Great Tribulation is the last and worst half of these seven years (we have seen that Jesus described the Tribulation as birth-pains which increase in intensity until the birth): For then there will be Great Tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened (Matthew 24:21,22).

Jesus used a similar description to Daniel's description of the Great Tribulation: At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a Time of Trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time (Daniel 12:1).

We have seen that the false-Church will be judged at this time: Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into Great Tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds (Rev 2:22).

Revelation 7:14 describes those in Heaven who had been martyred at this time: These are the ones who come out of the Great Tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

The Beginning of the Tribulation.
Before the Tribulation there will be a time of normality (as in the days of Noah) and there will be great hopes for peace in the world. But then the Lord will come as a thief to remove the Church (the restraining force on the antichrist and evil generally) and the Tribulation (the Day of the Lord) will start suddenly with great destruction:
For you know perfectly that the Day of the Lord (the Tribulation) will come as a thief in the night (the Rapture).
For when they shall say Peace and Safety then sudden DESTRUCTION comes upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape (1Thessalonians 5:2,3, cf. the birth-pains of Matthew 24:8). The Tribulation will start with a sudden onset of destruction around the world, described by Jesus as birth-pains (Matthew 24:7-14). Things get even worse in the Great Tribulation (v15-21) which will only be ended by the return of Christ (v22-31).

The Tribulation starts with Christ starting to open the Seals in Heaven (Revelation 6). These initial judgements seem to loose evil forces on earth that had been previously restrained, causing the sudden onset of Trouble on every level. The first Seal shows antichrist released to go forth in world-conquest. In order to get a foothold in the Middle-East he makes a seven-year treaty with Israel. According to Daniel, this covenant is made early on in the Tribulation (Daniel's 70th Week) on earth:
Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one Week (seven years); but in the middle of the Week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering (Daniel 9:24-27). This may involve Gentile (U.N?) control of the Temple Mount, and permission for Israel to worship in her Temple there (Rev 11:1-4). This covenant initiates the final 7-Times of Gentile dominion over Israel. Therefore in the covenant Israel submit to antichrist, trusting in him for protection, instead of receiving Jesus, the true Christ (John 5:43).

This covenant is also described in Isaiah 28:14-22.
Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scornful men, who rule this people who are in Jerusalem, because you have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves. Israel trusts antichrist for protection thinking it will protect them from invasion and death but it is a deceptive covenant.

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily.
They should have trusted in Christ for life and protection rather than in antichrist. But the majority of Israel (who still don't believe in Jesus), rush hastily into this covenant.

Also I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet; the hail will sweep away the refuge of

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lies, and the waters will overflow the hiding place. Your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand; when the overflowing scourge passes through, then you will be trampled down by it (they will not be protected but rather invaded by antichrist at Mid-Tribulation resulting in great suffering and death).

As often as it goes out it will take you; for morning by morning it will pass over, and by day and by night;it will be a terror just to understand the report. For the bed is too short to stretch out on, and the covering so narrow that one cannot wrap himself in it (the Great Tribulation). For the LORD will rise up as at Mount Perazim, He will be angry as in the Valley of Gibeon, that He may do His work, His awesome work, and bring to pass His act, His unusual act. Now therefore, do not be mockers, lest your bonds be made strong; for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts, a destruction determined even upon the whole earth (God's wrath poured out reaching its climax at the Second Coming).

OTHER NAMES FOR THE TRIBULATION
The 70th Week (seven years) of Daniel (Daniel 9:27) whose purpose is to bring in the Kingdom of God on earth. It is not part of the Mystery Church Dispensation, but is the last seven years of the Dispensation of Israel. Therefore it is revealed by the Old Testament prophets, and God's purposes in it centre on Israel not the Church (who will be in Heaven). The origin of these 7-years of judgement is the 7-years of grace (AD 26-33) when John and Jesus Christ presented the Kingdom to Israel. When Israel rejected Christ and His Kingdom (after these 7 years had run their course), God could not establish the Kingdom, so He cancelled these 7-years in order to rerun them after the Church-Age as the Tribulation, after which He would establish His Kingdom on earth. Because Israel rejected the 7-years of grace under Christ, they must now suffer 7-years of judgement under Antichrist: "I (Christ) have come in My Father's name, and you (Israel) do not receive Me; if another (antichrist) comes in his own name, him you will receive" (John 5:43).

The Day of the Lord is the most common description - it refers to a special this time God will intervene directly in history to bring salvation to His people and punish the rebellious as never before, judging sin on a world-wide scale to bring things to a conclusion and establish a new order. The term refers to the whole Tribulation, although often the climax is primarily in view - namely the Return of Jesus Christ.

The Day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night (1Thess 5:2).

Not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the Day of the Lord has already come (2Thessalonians 2:2).

For the Day is near, even the Day of the LORD is near; it will be a day of clouds, the time (of judgment) of the Gentiles (Ezekiel 30:3).

It is a time of judgement:
For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low (Isaiah 2:12)
Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty (Isaiah 13:6).
Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it (Isaiah 13:9).
Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. It will be as though a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him! Or as though he went into the house, leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him! Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it? (Amos 5:18-20).

Often the prophets would refer to a judgment of God in history as a foretaste, picture and warning of the DAY OF THE LORD when God's judgments on the nations will be brought to their conclusion. After describing a judgment on Israel, Joel warns: Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come (1:15). Then in Joel 2 and 3, he describes in detail, THE DAY OF THE LORD: Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD comes, for it is nigh at hand (Joel 2:1). After describing judgments on Edom, Obadiah warns all nations:
For the day of the LORD is near upon all the nations: as you have done, it shall be done unto you: your reward shall return upon your own head (v15).

The Day of the Lord is mentioned in Zephaniah 1:7-13 as a time of Trouble for Israel.
It is: The Day of Israel's Calamity (Deut 32:35, Obadiah 12-14)

Zephaniah 1:14-2:3 describes it also as judgement upon the whole world.
The Great Day of the Lord (1:14) refers particularly to the Great Tribulation.
It is the Day of Wrath, of Trouble, of Distress, of Wasteness, of Desolation, of Gloominess and Darkness and Clouds, of thick darkness (1:15; see also Amos 5:18-20; Joel 2:2).
It is The Day of the Trumpet and Alarm (1:16).
It is the day of the LORD'S wrath (1:18), the day of the LORD'S anger (2:2,3)
Zephaniah 2:4-15 describes the judgement on nations that works through history and is brought to its completion at the Lord's Return.

The Day of the Lord refers generally to the Tribulation, but often it refers specifically to the Second Advent of Christ when God's judgements will come to their climax. In Joel 3:14 the Second Coming is in view:
Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

The actual day of Christ's Return is called the Great and Terrible Day of the Lord:
The LORD shall utter his voice before His army: for His camp is very great: for He is strong that executes His word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? (Joel 2:11).
The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come (Joel 2:31).
Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD (Malachi 4:5).
The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord

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come (Acts 2:20).

The Day of Vengeance (Isaiah 34:8, 35:4, 61:2) also refers to the Second Coming:
For it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion ( Isaiah 34:8).
For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts has a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates (Jeremiah 46:10).

This Day includes the invasion of Israel and capture of Jerusalem by antichrist at Armageddon, which is just before the Lord's Return: Behold, the day of the LORD comes, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle (Zechariah 14:1-3, also Joel 2:1-11).

The Day of the Lord includes the time He will judge all the nations (in the 40-day interval after the Second-Coming of Christ) hence: The Year of Recompense (Isaiah 34:8).

The Day of the Lord extends through the Millennium to the destruction of the Heavens and the earth, because the Lord Jesus will rule and judge the earth directly during this time: The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which (at its close) the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up (2Peter 3:10). Then Christ hands the Kingdom to God (1Cor15:28) and a new Day dawns with a new heaven and earth (the Eternal State) called: The Day of God:
Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (2 Peter 3:12).
Some translations imply from this verse that we can 'hasten the coming of the day of God', that is: we can speed up the Coming of Christ by our obedience. However this cannot be since it is a time fixed by the Father (Acts1:7, Mark13:32). Peter is using the picture of a runner looking to the finishing line and speeding toward it with all his might. Likewise, we are to keep our eyes on Christ's Return (the fixed finishing line of our race) that is coming ever close and let that motivate us to put all our might into running the race that we might cross the line in victory.

In addition, that Day, or the Day, or the great Day occurs over 75 times. The Day of Christ or of The Day of the Lord Jesus however, is a reference to the Rapture in 1Cor 1:8, 5:5; 2Cor 1:14, Phil 1:6,10; 2:16).

Finally, in Revelation 1:10, we are told that John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day.
This could signify that he was transported forward in time to witness firsthand the Day of the Lord from God's viewpoint and write it down for us in the Book of Revelation or else it was simply the special day of the year when everyone was expected to worship the current Roman Caesar.

The Tribulation is also called: The Great Day of the Wrath of the Lamb of God (Revelation 6:15-17).
The Wrath to come (1Thessalonians 1:10).
The Wrath (1Thessalonians 5:9, Revelation 11:18).
The Wrath of God (Revelation 15:1,7; 14:10, 19; 16:1).
The Hour of Judgment (Revelation 14:7).
The Indignation (wrath) (Isaiah 26:20,21; 34:2; Daniel 11:36).
These terms show that the whole Tribulation is a time of Wrath and Judgment, although it increases in intensity in the Great Tribulation and then again with the Bowls of Wrath and the Second Coming.

The Tribulation is upon the whole earth.
It is: Jehovah's Strange Work and Act - a destruction upon the whole earth (Isaiah 28:21,22).
The Hour of Trial which comes upon the whole earth (Rev 3:10).
Distress of nations (Luke 21:25,26).
We saw that Jesus describe it as Birth-Pains for the whole world (Matthew 24:8).

The Tribulation is a time of shaking for all nations:
Thus says the LORD of hosts: Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all Nations (Christ) shall come (Haggai 2:6,7).
This is confirmed in v21,22: I will shake heaven and earth. I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms. I will overthrow the chariots and those who ride in them; the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.
This is God moving in judgment removing all things that are not of Him, so that only His kingdom will remain and stand on the earth: Now He has promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.
Now, Yet once more, indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire (Hebrews12:26-29).

However it is especially a time of Tribulation for Israel (Matthew 24:9-12).
In fact all her sufferings thus far, including the Holocaust will not compare to the Tribulation.
In this connection, it is called: The Time of Jacob's Trouble (Jeremiah 30:7) and The Time of Trouble (Daniel 12:1, Zephaniah1:15). The Tribulation is the consequence of Israel's rejection of Christ causing Daniel's 70th Week to rerun.
In Zechariah 11:12,13, Israel's rejection, illustrated in the prophecy of the 30 pieces of silver, leads to her suffering under the antichrist in v14-17. This same theme is picked up in 13:7-9.

The Tribulation is the time of the end (Daniel 12:9)
and the end (consummation) of the age (Matthew13:40,49; 24:3,6).

THE PURPOSES OF THE TRIBULATION:

1. To end wickedness and wicked ones.
Evil is allowed to come to its fullness so that it can be revealed and judged: Behold, the Day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it (Isaiah 13:9).

The earth is violently broken, the earth is split open, the earth is shaken exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall totter like a hut; Its transgression shall be heavy upon it, and it will fall, and not rise again. It shall come to pass in that day that the LORD will punish on high the host of exalted ones, and on the earth the kings of the earth. They will be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and will be shut up in the prison; After many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously (Isaiah 24:19-23).

For behold, the LORD comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth will also disclose her blood, and will no more cover her slain (Isaiah 26:21).

Thus says the LORD of hosts: Behold, disaster shall go forth From nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up From the farthest parts of the earth. And at that day the slain of the LORD shall be from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth. They shall not be lamented, or gathered, or buried; they shall become refuse on the ground (Jeremiah 25:32-33).

2. To bring a world-wide revival: And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come (Matthew 24:14).
This will be spearheaded by the 144,00 Evangelists from Israel and their converts, many of whom will be martyred (Revelation 7) and then by the two witnesses (Revelation 11). They will preach the Kingdom of God is at hand.

3. To break the stubborn pride of Israel so that at the end there will be a believing Israel to enter the Millennium.
In the Tribulation, Israel will come to faith in her Messiah: How long shall the fulfilment of these wonders be? Then I heard the man ...when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time (three and a half years); and when the power of the holy people has been completely broken, all these things shall be finished (Daniel 12:5-7).

Many Old Testament passages describe the general nature of this time.
1. The Little Apocalypse of Isaiah (Isaiah 24:1-27:13).

2. Day of Jehovah passages relating to the world (Isaiah 2:12-22; 13:6-16, Ezekiel 30:1-9, Joel 1:15-20, Obadiah 10-20; Zephaniah 1:14-2:3).

3. The Tribulation has a special relation to Israel (Deuteronomy 4:30; Ezekiel 20:37; Daniel 12:1; Zechariah 13:8,9, Matthew 24:7-26; Revelation 7, 12, 17; Isaiah 3:1-4:1; Ezekiel 13:1-7; Joel 2:1-11; 3:14-17; Amos 5:18-20; Zephaniah 1:7-13). For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. And these are the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it (Jeremiah 30:3-7).